



**SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY**

CHILDREN & FAMILIES  
COMMISSION

# **San Joaquin County Children and Families Commission Summary of Strategic Plan for 2002–2005**

---

Prepared by Harder+Company Community Research  
February 2002

The San Joaquin County Children and Families Commission's strategic plan starts with a vision in which young children and their families in San Joaquin County are valued. The Commission is dedicated to providing the necessary tools and environment to raise happy, healthy and smart children. The Commission's mission is to facilitate the development and implementation of a comprehensive, integrated system of early childhood development services for all children prenatal to five years of age.

The Commission believes that the most effective use of its funds is to focus on a relatively small group of critical community needs. The strategic plan identifies specific locations and populations within the County with high levels of unmet needs affecting young children and their families. The Commission's initiatives for 2002–2005 will rely on this focused strategy to improve outcomes for children and families. Specifically, the Commission will:

- Focus its resources on those locations and populations in the County which have the highest levels of demonstrated need;
- Support only those service providers who respond to the specific objectives and outcomes in the strategic plan;
- Actively promote system integration by requiring the providers it funds to use coordination procedures developed by the Commission and to participate in activities required by the Commission;
- Support the building of organizational capacity for those providers best suited to meet the long-term needs of the County's children and families; and
- Use its evaluation to document the accomplishment of the outcomes established by the Commission.

The Commission intends to support five initiatives over the next three years. These are listed below along with the approximate three-year funding allocation for each initiative. The plan identifies the specific outcomes to be achieved under each of these initiatives.

1. **Increasing parental skills and knowledge in high need areas in San Joaquin County. (\$6,000,000).** This initiative is intended to provide parents with information about infant and toddler development, nutrition and effective parenting practices. This will result in stronger families and increases in the number of children who are ready to start school.
2. **Increasing the health of children in high need areas in San Joaquin County, and responding to other needs. (\$3,000,000).** This initiative will support the delivery of services to parents and children to enhance child health and safety. It includes child abuse prevention as well as health and dental care. This initiative will also included any other needs (which may or may not be health-related) that may emerge, but that are presently not defined.
3. **Increasing the supply and quality of child care in high need areas of San Joaquin County. (\$10,000,000).** This initiative is intended to make quality child care available to

more families in the County and to increase the skills of existing and new child care providers. It is intended to benefit child care centers, family day care homes and exempt child care providers.

4. **Increasing responsiveness and access in the service system for children and families in San Joaquin County. (\$3,000,000).** This initiative is intended to make services easier to use, to reduce the administrative burden placed on parents and providers and to increase provider capacity to work together to serve families. Included in this initiative will be the development of a web-based data collection for Commission-supported providers.
5. **Increasing the school readiness of children in San Joaquin County through participation in the state Commission's School Readiness Initiative. (\$3,000,000 + approximately \$3,000,000 in matching funds from the state = approximately \$6,000,000).** The state Commission's School Readiness Initiative is a model for service delivery and integration that address the objectives included under the other initiatives described here. The County's participation in the state initiative will bring in state matching funding to supplement the County's allocation of its own resources.

In addition to supporting the delivery of key services in these five areas through large contracts and mini-grants, the Commission will encourage service providers to apply for planning support contracts. These can take up to six months to complete and will not exceed \$50,000. They can be used to conduct research that would lead to a direct services application on an issue addressed in the plan, identify successful models of service delivery, create and organize a network of service providers or other purposes which build capacity to address the long-term results to be achieved.

In working to improve the system of care, the Commission intends to pursue two broad strategies. The first is to strengthen the organizational capacity of individual service providers. The second is to work to improve system coordination and move to system integration where possible. The strategic plan describes the specific mechanisms to be used for these purposes.

Outcomes-based evaluation remains a priority for the Commission. The three-year plan identifies a relatively small number of outcomes and indicators in each of the initiatives. To be eligible for funding, service providers must agree to use the Commission's resources to accomplish those outcomes only. Service providers will be required to use those indicators and to make themselves accountable for producing those results. An important element of the Commission's approach to evaluation is an emphasis on capacity building. This approach is consistent with the direction established by the Commission in its determination to use its investment in children and families not just to provide needed services but to build a stronger system of services overall. Another critical element of the Commission's evaluation plan is the establishment of a web-enabled database to assist its contractors with the collection and management of client-level data. By the end of this planning period, FY 2004 – 05, all the Commission's service providers will be using this data system.

The Commission intends to spend \$25 million on its five initiative areas between FY 2002–03 and FY 2004–05. The Commission has allocated an amount to each of these five categories based on its assessment of the level of community need, the opportunities for the Commission to

make a lasting difference and the level of funding available from other sources. These initiatives will be focused on meeting community need in the parts of the county that have demonstrated the highest levels of unmet need. They will rely on the objectives and outcomes described earlier in the plan to give direction to service providers. In addition to the initiatives, the Commission intends to commit \$3.9 million in three additional categories: mini-grants, matching funding and capital funding. Each of these categories will have their own funding mechanisms, separate from the major initiatives. Total new program-related expenditures for FY 2002–2005 will be \$28.9 million (see chart below). The Commission will spend an additional \$3.5 million to fulfill the funding commitments made in previous rounds of funding. Combined program expenditures over the three-year period will be \$32.4 million.

### **New Program Expenditures, FY 2002–05**

<b>Initiatives</b>	
Child Care	10,000,000
Parent Education	6,000,000
System Improvement	3,000,000
Children's Health + Other Needs	3,000,000
School Readiness	3,000,000
Subtotal – Initiatives	\$ 25,000,000
<b>Other Program Expenditures</b>	
Mini-Grants	1,500,000
Capital Funding	1,500,000
Matching Funding	900,000
<b>Total New Program Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 28,900,000</b>